

# Broadband Madison, Minnesota

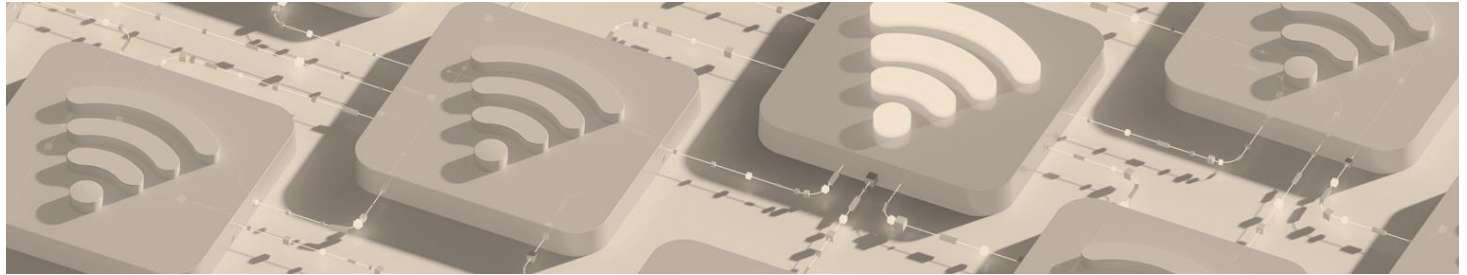


Upper Minnesota Valley  
**REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
COMMISSION**

Helping Communities Prosper

*“The community of Madison would benefit greatly from a broadband infrastructure. As a member of this community, I can speak to the difficulties, we had in our household during the pandemic while trying to work and attend school from home. It was and still is a challenge with the internet service we currently have available in this area.”*

-Madison Resident



In fall 2021, the City of Madison received \$2,560,000 for broadband improvement through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Small Cities Coronavirus Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG-CV).

As part of the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Minnesota received a special allocation to address community needs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Madison applied for funding to install fiber to the premise broadband to residential and non-residential properties within the city limits. Grant funds will be used to connect residents. The total grant budget for Madison is \$4,560,000 and includes a grant of \$2,560,000.

The DEED funds cannot pay for the commercial portion of the project, so the matching dollars are earmarked primarily for the commercial portion of the project. Matching funds came from the City of Madison, Lac qui Parle County, and a cash match

requirement from the selected broadband provider. Farmer’s Mutual Telephone Company was awarded the contract. The project budget includes \$1,600,000 in match from Farmers Mutual Telephone Company, \$400,000 in local match from the city and county, and \$2,468,993 in grant funding from DEED.

Construction and installation of broadband began in May of 2022 and is expected to be completed in early 2023.

**729** premises will receive broadband once the project is completed.

The City of Madison had been looking for ways to improve their broadband for years. In 2015 the City formed a committee and worked with the UMRDC to explore broadband options after the surrounding rural areas were upgraded with an all fiber to the premise broadband network in 2010. The committee held a number of planning meetings, conducted community surveys and other community outreach efforts, and met with area providers so see if any would provide increased service to the community. The City considered finance options available to them.

### 2016 Community Survey Results

72% respondents indicated that they would be willing to change providers for increased speeds and reliability

The recommendations of this community work were:

1. Present the conclusions of the committee work and provide the recommendations to the Madison City Council
2. Explore infrastructure (city owned vs private vs combination)
3. Share the data with a provider to determine provider interest and costs associate with the project. Develop/obtain a feasibility study
4. Determine funding needs and sources

The City of Madison did follow up with these recommendation and completed a feasibility study on developing a fiber to the premise network and has been looking at ways to fund the project since it's

completion. The main barrier was that the city had existing internet providers and were therefore considered served and were ineligible for grant funding.

In the spring of 2021, a new funding source for broadband was made available to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Small Cities Coronavirus Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG-CV) through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). This was the only broadband funding source that allowed applicants in areas that were categorized as served or underserved by broadband.

In June 2021, the UMRDC authored an application for the City of Madison for CDBG\_CV funding to improve broadband service in the City and was awarded \$2,560,000 in funding.

